Source Detective Notes

Assess source details for credibility and fit.

5.T.RA.2.b "Determine credibility and relevance by assessing the strengths and weaknesses of source texts to support a topic or message. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that make a source seem credible, and circle details that show whether it fits Maya's message. Number the three sources from most useful to least useful for Maya's proposal.

Flowers for Pollinators

1. For a class proposal, Maya wanted to support this message: Our school should plant native flowers for pollinators. She opened a 2024 guide from the county university extension office. The guide was written by Dr. Elena Ruiz, a horticulture educator. It lists native flowers for the county and explains that its recommendations come from local plant surveys and research studies. Links lead to the studies.

2. Next, Maya found a post called "Five Flowers Every Bee Loves" on a seed store's website. No author or date appears on the page. The post says that one imported flower will attract every kind of bee, but it gives no research, observations, or links. At the bottom, the store offers a discount on packets of that flower.

3. Maya also read a 2023 article from a state natural history museum. A biologist who studies monarch butterflies wrote it, and the article names several research reports. It describes how monarchs travel thousands of miles between Mexico and parts of the United States and Canada. However, the article does not discuss local native flowers, school gardens, or which plants grow in Maya's county.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What are two details that make the university extension guide seem credible?

2. What is one weakness of the seed store post? Explain why that weakness matters.

3. Why is the museum article less relevant to Maya's proposal than the university extension guide?

4. Which source should Maya use first to support her message? Give one credibility reason and one relevance reason.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a message for a school project. In 3 to 4 sentences, describe two sources you could use, name the source you would use first, and explain one credibility detail and one relevance detail that support your choice.

ANSWER KEY

Source Detective Notes

GRADE 5 · 5.T.RA.2.b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details that make a source seem credible, and circle details that show whether it fits Maya's message. Number the three sources from most useful to least useful for Maya's proposal. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What are two details that make the university extension guide seem credible?	**It was written by a horticulture educator, and it uses local plant surveys and research studies with links to the studies.**
2	What is one weakness of the seed store post? Explain why that weakness matters.	**It has no author, date, research, observations, or links. Its claim should be checked because the post does not provide evidence.**
3	Why is the museum article less relevant to Maya's proposal than the university extension guide?	**It is about monarch migration, not local native flowers, school gardens, or plants that grow in Maya's county.**
4	Which source should Maya use first to support her message? Give one credibility reason and one relevance reason.	**She should use the university extension guide. It is written by a horticulture educator and supported by research, and it gives local information about native flowers for the county.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

My message is that our school should add a water-bottle refill station. One source is a 2025 report from the city water department that gives data about plastic bottle waste, and the other is an undated social media post that makes the same suggestion without evidence. I would use the city report first because it names its agency and data, and it is relevant to reducing bottle waste at school.

Look for credibility details such as an identified author, expertise, date, evidence, research links, or a possible reason for bias. For Maya's proposal, the extension guide should be ranked first; accept different rankings of the other two sources when students explain the trade-off between credibility and relevance.